



To the right honorable
my verie good Lord, Robert
Deuoreux, Earle of Essex and Ewe,
Vicount of Hereford, Lord Ferrers of
Chartley, &c. Master of the Queenes
Maiesties horse, knight of the most noble order
of the Garter, and one of her Maiesties most ho-
nourable priue Counsel, the continual increas-
of Gods euerlasting fauour, peace and
comfort in this, and in the
world to come.

88; 115

MAnie men (right Hencurable) when they intend some euil, I meane when they haue resolued freely and boldly to trade in some sinne without checke and controllment, doe seeke to shroude themselues vnder the cloth and countenance of some great persons of Worship and Honour. If my purpose or practise were such, I might iustly feare to bee

A 2 crossed

The Epistle

crostred and cursed in this my enter-
prise. The searcher of all hearts know-
eth, that my purpose, prayers, and en-
deours (through his gracious af-
fiance) are, and shall bee, to keepe a
good conscience in my ministerie, to
walke in the vprightnesse of my heart,
and to bee k p: blamel sse to the com-
ming of Iesus Christ. In this resolu-
tion, may it see me good vnto your Ho-
nour, as you haue alreadie (at the ear-
nest and humble sute of manie my ve-
rie good and worshipfull friends) re-
ceiuued me to fauer: so still to conti-
nue your most honourable protection
for my further encouragement in well
doing. May it also please your ho-
nourable and religious disposition, to
comfort and coun'enaunce this Mite,
and small measure of comfort, which
according to grace receiuued, I haue once
addressed, and now the second time
published, and enlarged for the relieve
of such as grieue and groane vnder the
heauie burthen of their finnes. Behold I
presume to present it vnto your Ho-
nour as the best present I haue, to testi-
fie my humble dutie, seruice, and thank-
fulnesse

Dedicatorie.

fulnesse. And if by Gods good fauour
and blessing there shall be ane one sentence,
worde, syllable, or letter, which
may bring, or adde comfort to you or
yours, I shall be occasioned the rather,
heartily to blesse God for so great mercie,
and to pray more instantlē,
that y^r Honour may
be blessed for
ever.

*Your honours most humble and
bounden servant in the Lord,*

Robert Linaker.

d

I



A C O M F O R T A B L E
T R E A T I S E F O R T H E
r e l i e f o f s u c h a s a r e a f f l i -
c t e d i n c o n s c i e n c e .

IT is not long since I promis-
ed you some small remem-
brance of my heartly desire to
afforde you some comfort,
concerning the inward affliction of your
minde, if the Lord shoud any way enable
me therunto. I haue now therefore (ac-
cording to the measure of grace receiuued)
performed that my promise, as you shall
understand by reading these leaues follow-
ing. Whereby if you shall reape so much
comfort, as from the depth of my heart, I
entreat the Lord you may, I shal account
my selfe for euer most nearely bound by
all maner of dutie, and thankfulness unto
his blessed maiestie. Howsoever it fall out,
you shall receive and keep this poore trea-
tise by you, as an undoubted record of my
good meaning towards you, and some o-
thers, of whose particuler estate I haue

*Your afflic-
tions are neither
common nor
safe.*

2 Consolations

some certaine knowlēdge, and for whome
I pray most heartily, as I do for you.

I confesse your affliction is neither com-
mon nor easie to be born. And that because
it is not outward, but inward, not of the
body but of the minde. For as Salomon
saith, A sorrowful minde drieth the
bones. Proverbs 17.22. Againe, A man
will sustaine his infirmitie, but a woun-
ded spirit who can beare it? Pro. 18.
14. His meaning is, that no outward
griefe or discommoditie whatsoeuer, but
may be indured, and borne with great pa-
tience and constancie. but if the conscience
be wounded, and striken with the feeling
of Gods wrath for sin, or any other great
cause, there is neither man nor woman
which is able to endure, and beare it out
long, without great & gracious assistance
from God. That this is so, you can speak
of your own experiance, yet for your com-
fort, remember that you are not alone, the
dñe consideration whereof may not a little
cheere vp your heart. For you reade of
some in the scriptures, some you heare of,
and some you know your selfe, who groane
vnder the same burden, whose consciences
are set very hard vpon the racks, & whose
poore

for an afflited conscience. 3

poore soules are in little case, as well as yours.

This is one principall point, which I would haue you thinke vpon continually, but then especially, whenathan woulde beare you down, that you are alone in this kinde of affliction, and that no body is so troubled as you are. For this purpose you may remember that sweete sentence of the holy apostle, wherem he doeth you to understand, that the same afflictions which yo: endure, are also accomplished and suffered of your other bretheren which are abroad in the world: as if he should say, let not such a thought as this ouer-sway you, that you shoulde think you haue no fellowes. For there bee a number of Gods deere childre, who are as much and as often troubled with the same griefe of minde aswell as you. For as there is no man so wise, so strong, or so rich, but there be many as wise, as strong, and as wealthie: so there is none so greatly grieved in body or minde, but there be many who are as deepe in the same griefe as they be. Againe, if your wilfull enemy shal by this kind of temptation assay to wound your weake conscience, that you belong not to God,

A principal comfort for the trou-
bled minde.

1. Pet. 5.9.

The best afflictions
are your partners

Another chief
comfort against
Sathan's tempta-
tion.

because

4 Consolations

because the correction is so sharpe, and the rod wherwith you are beaten so smarting, you may boldly step to him, laying his weapon out of his hand, & therewith thrust him thow: for the maner of your chasciment doeth proue verie strongly to your conscience, that you are highly in Gods fauor, and that because you are not only partaker of that correction wherof all the sonnes and daughters of God are partakers (for so many as are without correction are bastards & not children) but of that kind of chasciment, which only is proper to those, who aboue many others haue bin in greater fauor with God. For example, David was a man (as you haue learned from the scriptures) accordynge to Gods own hart, that is, such a one as the Lord set great store by, he notwithstanding was thoroughly whipt with this three stringed whip, as you may read at large not in one but in many Psalms, by name the sixt Psalm throughout, a great part of the two and twentieth, the eight and thirtie the whole Psalm, the one and fiftie, and manie moe, which you maie find by diligent reading in the booke of the Psalms, where you shall understand that

Hebr. 12. 8.

David was great
by loues of God,
and specially
afflicted.

for an afflicted conscience.

5

that his estate is all one with yours.

Againe you may remember that Paul the Apostle was a chosen vessel, whom God had separated from his mothers wombe : and therewithall you can not bee ignorant. how sharply he was handled, when the messenger of Sathan was sent to boxe and bullet him verie sore, and that for a long season: so that although he praied often and earnestly, yet could he not be deliuered. This only he received as an answer from the Lord, that his grace should be sufficient to vnderprep and stay him in his greatest temptation, for my power (saith he) is made perfect through weaknesse. In this resolution he referred himselfe as well contented, untill such time as the Lord should grant him full release. These are choise examples of choise persons, and not many such to be found in the whole bodie of the Scripture: that you may consider how great a priuilege of favour God hath vouchesafed vpon you, to make you equall with his dearest children, and that in such afflictions, as for their suffering of them, they are aboue many thousands most renowned. But why stand I vpō these examples, when as Iesus Christ himselfe

Acts 9.15.
Galat. 1.15.

Paul's chosen
vessel sharply
handled.

Pass not by this
example without
some good medita-
tion.

Trouble of mind
a great privilege
of Gods fauour.

Mat. 3.17.
The Sonne of
God most trou-
bled.

Luke 22.44.

your affliction is
but a flea b'ring
to that which
your Savior hath
suffered for your
sake, that you
might have ease.

Mat. 27.45.

6 Consolations

himselfe (being the sonne and heire in whom onely the Father is most highly well pleased) was not onely in measure and mercie thus chastised as you are, but as we say commoly, beaten without mer-ry, yea hee was turned and beaten, so as though the exceeding great anguish of his soule, he sweat such a sweat in the garden, as never man sweat the like, that is, drops like drops of blood, trickling downe to the ground. Yea further, being brought and hanged upon the crosse (beside all the vil- lantie offered and done to him by the mali- cious cruel Jewes) his owne father hand- led him so extremely, not like a father, but as a most iust iudge, that he could not any longer bite in his griefe, but in great bit- ternesse he breakes out into these wordes sauyng of deepe despaire, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? These wordes, I say, sauyng strongly of despaire, because he cries out that God had forsa- ken him: yet was he farre from despaire, because in the greatest conflict with Hell and Sathan, his whole trust was in God, and therefore with great confidence, not once, but againe he doubleth his speach saying, My God, my God. Thus you haue

haue not onely manie of the faithfull, but
the sonne of God, (clad in your nature)
more then a partner with you in your suf-
ferings : which I haue alreadged to this
end, that you may know that as all things Rom 8.18.
worke for the best to those that loue
God, even to them that are called of
purpose: so this affliction of yours, which
because it is so sharp, shall therefore worke
your good a great deale the rather. For,
experience teacheeth, that that purgation
which for the time doth work most strong-
ly, and putteth the patient to the greatest
paine, doth in the end bring the most ease
to him who hath received it. But it may
be you will take exception against this last One exception.
example of Christ Jesus, and say that hee
was not so tormented for his owne, but
for your sinne, because he was without Hebre. 4. 15.
sinne. Therein you speake most truly. For 1. John 2. 2, 3.
the Apostle saith, Hee was delivred to Rom 4. 25.
death for our sinnes, as if he shou'd say,
whatsoever griesse or torment hee endured
luying, or dyng, hee endured it for our
saues, that the v hole fruit & cōfōrt therof
might redound to vs. And to this agreeith
that which is written in the first Epistle of
Peter, Who his owne scife bare our sins 1. Pet. 2. 24.
in

The sharpest aſ-
ſe & ſore worke
the fōrcetl
comfort.

in his bodie on the tree, that we being deliuered from sinne, shoulde liue in righteousnesse by whose stripes we are healed. From henceforth therefore may you reape no small comfort, for the peace of your conscience in the greatest heate of temptations. For in as much as he suffered not for his owne, but for your sinne, you may be therfore well assured that you shall never take of thosse hellish tormentes, which your sinnes haue deserved, and that because your suster, your mediator, your Saviour Iesus Christ hath in your nature, but in his owne person (even to the uttermost of Gods iustice) suffered them for you, that you might never haue them, but be fully and for euer discharged, both in this world, and in the world to come. For as the Apollie witnesseth. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Iesus. Here againe I know wel you wil thus reply that you will grant, there is no condicmation to them that are in Christ Iesus, þ must needes be true. But all the doubt lies in this, whether you your selfe bee in Christ Iesus or not. For of that cannot you be persuaded. If you could be assured therof,

then

Christ hath suffered the tormentes of hell, that we might not suffer them, yea, that you may never suffer them.

Rom.8.1.

Another examp-
le.

To be in Christ
Iesus is true hap-
pines to him or
her which is affec-
ted therof.

for an afflicted conscience. 9

then you wouldest not doubt, but you were without all danger of condemnation. But this is one point which doth work no small trouble in your conscience. Go to then, let this be one chief point to deal with you in.

And first to begin withall, let me ask you this one question. And I do not only pray, *A great charge* but on Gods behalfe for his glory, and the good of your soul, I charge you to answer me plainly & truly. Had you euer any assurance of salvation in al your life? were you euer persuaded by the preaching of þ word to be saued by the death of Christ Jesus? did you euer feel the power of true repen-
tance in your soule by these marks, þ you were more greeued & sorry at the heart for your sins, then for any thing in the whole world: did you, and doe you bear a dead-
ly hatred against them, as against the di-
uell himselfe? did you, and doe you put-
pose to the uttermost of your power, to
forbeare and forswear the practise of them
all, and to walke in holinesse and rigthe-
ousnesse all the dayes of your life? did that
word which you haue heard so long, so
soundly, and so powerfully preached to
your conscience, which you reade so full-
gently, wherein ~~you~~ meditate and take so *psal. 1.8.*

*Once assured and
ever assured of
salvation.*

*An unfeigned Con-
fession for sinnes,
deadly habens,
sound purpose of
renouewal, are
unshaken marks
of Gods childe.*

2.Cor. 7.9,10,11

*Luke 7.19.
See you answere
to euerie article
nearly as you will
answere at your
peril.*

You

great

great delight as that you count al worldly
thangs but dung in comparison thereof: did
that word, I say, never speake peace-
able to your conscience by the holy minis-
terie: did it never giae you assurance and
joy in the holy Ghost: did it never worke
such sweete comfort, as no worldly joy
could be like unto it: did you never heare
such a sermon from your owne godly and
carefull pastor, or from any other, that
you haue said at your comming home, you
would not for all the worlds good but you
had heard it, because it was so sweete and
comfortable: did you never speake that
word, from the true feeling of the heart,
which might warrant your soule, that you
are in Christ Jesus: If this worde hath
had this gracious and powertfull worke in
your soule (as I am fully perswaded it
hath, and your selfe cannot denie it: for if
you doe, beside the great wrong you offer
your own soule, you trespass against that
spirit, whereby you haue bene sealed unto
the day of redemption) then know assur-
edly you are so grased into his body of Christ
Jesus, as nothing shall be able to separe
you from that loue which the Lord your
God beareth you in his deare Sonne, in
whom

whome hee hath so loued you once, as hee
 must needes loue you for euer. And that
 because the Euangelist saith, whome hee
 loues he loues to the end. For the gifts
 and calling of God are without repen-
 tance. Againe, God is not as man that
 hee should lie, neither as the sonne of
 man that hee should repent. Hath he
 saide, and shall he not do it? and hath he
 spoken it, and shall hee not accomplish
 it? No, be you well assured, and write vpon
 it, that the strength of Israel wil not
 he nor repent. For, as the apostle James
 saith, with him there is no variablenesse
 nor shadowing by turning. Let these
 and such like places be alwaies in your re-
 membrance, and giue your selfe vnto the
 continuall meditation thereof. For they
 shall stand you in great stead, if you can
 call them to minde, when your tempta-
 tions shal assaile you with greatest strengthe.
 And forget not, often to thinke of such
 excellent places as that is, which you find
 written in the eight chapter of the Epistle
 written to the Romanes, and the sixe and
 thirtieh verse, after this manner, What
 shal separat vs from the loue of Christ?
 Shall tribulation or anguish, or persecu-

Therefore read
 them often and
 continually that
 you may always
 have them at
 your fingers end

tion, or famine, or nakednesse, or peril, or sword, &c. No, I am perswaded, that neither death nor life, angels nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature shall be able to separate vs from the loue of God which is in Iesus Christ our Lord. And full sweet to this purpose are those wordes of the holie prophet David. The Lorde is neere vnto them that are of a contrite heart, and will saue such as be afflicted in spirit. Great are the troubles of the righteous: but the Lorde deliuereth him out of them all. Againe, weeping may abide at euening, but ioy commeth in the morning. But you finde no such matter you saie, for this trouble of minde hath holden you, not onelie nights and daies, but weekes and moneths, yea and yeeres, and yet you can finde no ease nor comfort. Be it so, yet bee not therefore out of heart, for the longer it bee before you haue ease, the more welcome it shal be when it commeth. And to this purpose are the wordes of the Wise-man where hee saith, The hope that is deferred, is the fainting of the heart, but when

Psal. 34.18,19.

Psal. 30.5.

when the desire commeth it is a tree of life. Lastly, let the words of Eliphaz the Temanite be fast bound vnto your soule, which you shall find thus reported in the booke of Job, the sixt chapter 17, 18, 19. verles. Beholde, blessed is the man whome God coriseth: therefore refuse not thou the correction of the Almighty. For hee maketh the wound and bindeth it vp: hee smiteth, and his handes make whole. Hee shall deliver thee in sixe troubles, and in the seuenth the euill shall not touch thee. The summe & vrst of all that which hath bin set downe from the beginning to this present place, is to encourage you concerning the manner of your affliction, which though it be very sharp & bitter to þ flesh, because no chaffiment for the present seemeth to be joyous but greevous: yet there is a time, when it shall bring the quiet fruit of righteousness vnto them that are exercised thereby. In regard hereof Moses the man of God saith, that the Lord humbled his owne chosen people and prooued them, that hee might doe them good at their latter ende. And truely, in my poore iudgement,

Hebe. 12. 11.

A principal conser-
uer for the afflic-
ted soule.

Deut. 8. 16.

Afflictions better tokens of Gods loue then richer and prosperitie.

Hebr. 1.3.

Math. 8. 20.

Hebr. 2.10.

2. Tim. 2. 11, 12.

Act. 14.22.

Rom. 8.28.

ment, you may gather more vndoubted assurance of Gods euerlasting fauour towards your soule by these inward afflictions, then by any outward prosperitie of anie worldly blessing whatsoeuer, whether it be of health, of riches, or such like. And that because in these your afflictions you are most like vnto your head Christ Iesus, who though hee were the right sonne and heire of the whole world: yet had hee not a house to hide his head in, as himselfe confesseth. But it pleased the Father (seeing hee would bring manie children vnto glorie) to consecrate the prince of their saluation through afflictions. Now, as the holy Apostle reasoneth. This is a true saying, if we be dead with him, we shal also live with him. If we suffer with him, we shal also reigne with him. To be short, the Holy ghost saith, That we must by many afflictions enter into the kingdom of God. And once againe, Those whom he knew before, hee also predestinated to be made like to the Image of his Sonne, that he might be the first-borne among many brethren. So that you may wel perceiue you are not thus farrre forth, any whit out of

of your way, but you keepe the rode, even the good way which leadeth you as streight as a line vnto the kingdome of heauen. And therefore as no traueller, who keepes his right way and knowes it, wil be sorry, but very glad, because he trusteth to come to that place, where his desire is to abide: so no more cause haue you to be grieved, but rather to reioyce, because you know you walke in the streight path, which shal bring you to that place of your abode, where you would so faine be, and where you shal abide most blessed and happie for euer. Thus much haue I thought good to offer vnto your godlie meditations, to encorage you concerning the maner of your afflictions. The Lord grant you a rich portion of his spirite, that your soule may receye a gracious blessing.

Now you shall further understand in few wordes, what shall be the substance of all the matter which followeth in the remainder of this pooze treatise. I purpose so neere as I can, to gather together those obiects, which you and others doe obiect against your selues: and so farre as the Lord shall affoord me his grace, I entend in order to answer them.

Afflictions the
highway to hea-
uen.

The substance
of the whole
Treatise follow-
ing.

The first obiection
and answere.

The troubled
minde doubts of
Gods fauour.

A needfull point
therefore make
it well.

Harken to Gods
spirit for he seekes
you.

The first and principall obiection (so far
as I can conceiue & learne by conference
with you, and with so many as I haue any
acquaintance) is this, That you doubt
much of Gods fauour towards you, that
you feare it greatly you are not the child
of God, and if you be, yet can not you be
theroef certainly perswaded. This obiec-
tion hath alreadie beeene answered in part:
not withstanding because it is as the foun-
dation of al the other obiections, I will in
hope of Gods gracious affiance indeuor
my selfe to answere it more fully, for your
better contentment. First therefore I would
gladly learne this one thing of you, or of
anie other (who is your partner in these
temptations) who it is þ beareth you so
greatly in hand, you are not the child of
God. If you answer, your conscience,
through the greatnessse of your sinnes doth
tel you so: then do I againe demand of
you, who it is that sets your conscience a-
wakte to vrge this point a to what end. If
it be Gods spirit, you may be right glad.
because then it is for your good, namely þ
you may goe out of your selfe, & secke the
forgiuenesse of your sinnes and euerla-
sting saluation in Chrys his death and o-
bedience

bedience, to the full assurance of Gods
saues, and the euerlastiug peace of your
conscience. But speake the truch, is it not
rather a strong temptation of ^{Hearken not to}
^{fathan, for he}
your deadly enemie to trouble the peace
of your conscience, and if it be possible, to
drive you to desperation. If it be so, as
I feare it greatly, then say I unto you,
there is no cause why you shoulde beleue
him. First because he is a lyer. Secondly ^{Iob. 8.14.}
because he is your enemie, who meanes
you no good at al. That he is a lyar it is
manisest, because he hath beene so from
the beginning. And he cannot nowe
chaunge his nature. It is as much against
his nature to speake the truch, as it is pos-
sible that God shoule lie, who is onely & ^{Heb. 6.18.}
ever true. Therefore, there is no cause
why you shoulde beleue such a common
liar as the Deuill (who will lie as fast as
a dogge can trot, as wee vse to say in
our common speach. You haue iust cause
therfore to except against him in this re-
spect. Againe, you neede not doubt
that hee is your enemy, and that to the
death; because hee is the common ac-
cuser of the bretheren, and like a roa-
ing Lion goeth about continually see-

^{1. Pet. 5.8.}

No credit to bee
gwen to the deuil
though he speake
the truthe, because
his meaning is
badde.

king whom he may deuoure. In regard whereof you are not to hearken to him, or
belleeue anie thing he shall saie vnto you,
no althougl he speake the truthe. And my
reason is, because he will not tell you the
truthe, to helpe, but to hinder you, not to
cheere, but to choake you, not to sauе, but
to spill your bloud. And whereas you will
replie, you cannot denie, but hee saith the
truthe concerning the greatnesse of your
sinnes, and that iust condamnation which
you haue deserued for them. I answere
thereto after this manner. That you are
not to take the knowledge of your sinnes
from Sathan, because he will not tell you
the truthe, and the whole truthe as it is in
deede. For either he will pare your sins,
and make them lesse then they be, to make
you altogether carelesse, or else hee will
make them greater then they be, to throw
you headlong into despaire. But you are
to take the perfyt knowledge of your sins
from the true understanding of the Lawe
of God, fast girded to your conscience,
by the holie ministerie, which GOD
hath ordained for this purpose, that you
maie thereby come to true and vnfained
repentaunce of all your sinnes, and bee
saued

Marke the deuils
unning.

The holy vse of
the Ministerie.

Rom.7.7.

Regard and re-
rence the mi-
nisterie if you
love your soule,

Saued through faith in Christ his blood.

For the blood of Christ doth cleane you from all sinne. And if you will yet reason

1. John 1.7.

against your selfe, that your sinnes are so great, that you can gather no assurance of Gods fauour towards you: then let mee offer to your consideration some one or two examples of such notorious knowne sinners, as the world cried shame of, and yet repenting had their sinnes forgiuen them.

Examples of no-
torious sinners
who repented
and were par-
doned.

I meane of set purpose to make chiose of those persons and people, who in the scriptures are noted to be most infamous. Because you and such as are so exercised as you are, doe indeed charge your selues further than you ought. For you make your selues so bad, as though none were to be compared unto you, or as though God had no mercie in store for you. And hereupon it comes to passe, that almost there is not any word of God which can bring peace unto your troubled consciences. I intend therefore to match you so, and with such, as you shall be foized to confess you are outmatched. The end shal be this, to bring glad tidings to your hearie and sorrowful soule, that God both is and will be more fauourable to you, then you

No easie manner
to comfort a
troubled mind.

Reasons to per-
suade the afflic-
ted.

The Lord per-
suade your
heart.

Marie Magdalene
a notorious and
knowne sinner.

you can as yet be persuaded. For if God haue shewed mercie to those, who by reason of their knowne sins, were in all mens iudgement further from mercie: how can he denie you mercie, who never brake into that outrage of sin, and yet doe most humblye sue vnto him for mercie. That good master, who forgave his bad seruant at his owne intreatie, ten thousand talents, would not haue beeke hard vnto him, who ought but a hundred pence, if he had sued vnto him, as he did to his cruell and unmercifull fellowe seruant, who by no meanes would bee entreated, to shewe that fauour in a little debt, which was shewed him in a verie great summe. Remember, I pray you, that you haue to deale with a God, who is farte more mercifull: and therefore you may bee sure to fiad more fauour. You reade in the Gospell of Saint Luke the seventh chapter, from the thirtie and sixt verse vnto the end of the chapter, of Marie Magdalene, and of her behauour, being a woman not only vehementlie suspected of lewde life, but openlie knowne for a common harlot, and generallie so taken, as may appeare by the wordes of Simon the Pharisie, who

reccl.

receiuing Jesus Christ into his house, thought never deale the better, but much the worse of him, because hee suffe-
red so bad a woman to come so neare him, but especially to lay any hande vpon him,
as to wash his feete with her teares, and
to wipe them with the haire of her head:
to kisse his feet, and to anoint them with
ointment. Althis notwithstanding, marke
what marueylous great mercie Jesus
Christ shewes to this so wretched and sin-
full woman. First he takes in very good
part, whatsoeuer she had done unto him,
whereas Simon looked he should not on-
ly haue shewed his great disliking of her
dealing, but to haue shaken her vp, & that
rundly for her sawciness, to come so neare
him without his loue and leauē. Secondly
he is so farre off from misliking her beha-
viour in that present action, that hee both
highly commend her to Simon, and that
after so special a maner, that he givē him
to understand he takes better liking of her
kindnesse, then of all the great prouision
which he had made for him: because what-
soeuer she did, she did it with an upright
heart towards him, and in a sincere loue
for the good of her own soule. Thirdly for
the

Luke 7.36.
The hypocrite
Pharise is over-
ded with Chast.

³
Jesus Christ likes
Maries doing.

³
Christ comm-
mend Maries rea-
son more then
mons great
dame.

Maries sinnes
are forgiuen her. 3

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tender your owne. If then you cannot de-
nie, but you are by great ods outmatched
in this example, shew me what sound rea-
son you can bring to prooue, why Jesus
Christ should not entreat you as kindly, &
shew you as much fauour as he shewed to
Mary, especially when as your sins (euen
by your own confession) are neither so no-
toxious, nor so apparant, and open in out-
ward transgressions, to be seene and iud-
ged by the world, as hers were. And yet
for all that your teares as manie, your
hart as much tormentid with sorrow, your
kindnesse as great to Christ in his mem-
bers, and your desire as great to be whol-
lie his at his commaundement. Did he re-
gard her, and will he reiect you: did he not
shew her a hard countenance, and will hee
ooke swellic vpon you: did not she let so
much as anie one teare fall in vaine: did
her teares moue him to compassion: and
doe you thinke he will not haue pitie vpon
you & put vp all your teares into his bo-
tel: were many sinnes forgiuen her, and
can any of your sins be unpardonid: was
her faith strong to sauе her, and shall your
faith want strength to sauē you: did Christ
say a farewell, bid her go in peace, and wil
he

The teares you
shed are not spilt
for the Lord hath
put them all in to
his bottell.

A familiar re-
semblance.

he send you away emptie without peace & soveretie. If you thinke so, you thinke much amisse, and therfore such a thought must not depart without somme challice-
ment. Suppose there is a man of so great
wealth, that hee knowes no end of his
goodes. And suppose that this man hath
many debtors, which owe him verie great
summes of money. As for example, some
owe him thousands, some hundreds, and
some many score of pounds. Amongst
them al there is one poore man, who owes
him twentie pounds, which hee is no way
able to pay, nor anie perte thereof, if hee
should bee cast in prison, and lie there till
he rot. If this great rich man shal cause
a proclamation to be made, that all and
euerie one of his debtors should come to
him, and he will frankly and freely forgive
them ali. although the debt were never so
great, vpon this condition, that they will
confesse and acknowledge the debt to bee
due, whether it were more or lesse. If the
poore man should come in among the rest
of the debtors, and confess himself to owe
him such a summe as I haue named, lay
forth his pouertie, and therewithall hum-
bly vpon his knees with teares beseech
m

He that forgives
a great debt, will
readily forgive a
small.

Him to shewe some fauour toward him: should not he in this case haue good hope to be forgiuen, especially if before his face he should see one to haue thousands forgiuen for a wrod of his mouth.

These things concerne you verie nearely, and therefore I am so much the rather to intreat you, not to make wylsh way of them, but as they do nearely concerne you and your good, so to lay them neare unto your heart, by reverent meditation, that your soule may finde a gracious and comfortable blessing. The second example whereof I would haue you to make diligent consideration, is written in the first chapter of the prophet Esay, and the eighteenth vers, where the Lord makes a marueilous large offer of great mercy unto a people, who had highly offended him, I meane the people of Israel. To these Israelites in most louing maner the Lord speaketh, Come, saith he, let vs reason together, though your sinnes were as crimson, they shall bee made white as snow, though they were red as scarlet, they shall be as wooll. What the offer is you heare, and how great it is, your selfe is able to iudge: even so large an offer of mercie

*Labour to apply
it you desire to
haue comfort.*

A second exam-
ple of the great
rebellion of
Israel.

ESAI. 1.18.

mercy as none can be greater. In one word, it is as if the Lord shoulde say. O Israel thou hast sinned against me thy good God most grievously, and hast deserved that I shoulde not onely punish thee sharply, but for euer cast thee cleane out of my honour. Notwithstanding vpon thine unfeigned repentance for all thy sinnes past, and a resolute and full purpose of amendment hereafter, I am content to forgive & forget them all, and to giue thee my gracious generall pardon, to acquit and discharge thee of all and euerie one of thine iniquities, that not so much as anie one of them shall bee able to condemne thee in this world, or in that which is to come.

*A general pardon
offered.*

*The euill con-
dition of the Is-
raelites.*

Here I pray you consider a little with me, the estate and condition of this people, at the time of this loutng offer, and therewith also consider, what cause there was why the Lord shoulde shew so great fauour to this people. Begin you at the second verse of the forenamed chapter, and marke aduisedly what manner of complaint the Lord takes vp against them. First hee calleth heaven and earth with all the creatures therein to wiitness their rebellion and

*An speale to all
the creatures of
Goodisce.*

and disobedience against him. Secondly ^{Vnthankefulnes,} he challengereth them of so monstrosous vnthankfulnes, that it is too too shamefull: for he shewes they were so farre gone in this point, that the brute beasts, euen the ore and the ale, which were dumme and without reason, were more thankfull in their kinde, to their owners for their fodder, then they were for so many thousands of blessings, which he had bestowed vpon them. Thirdly in the third verse he draws out against them, a very substantiall indictment both for words and matter, wherein he layes forth all their ill behauing, and paints them out in most lively coloures, calling them with great detestation, A sinfull nation, a people laden with iniquitie, a seede of the wicked, corrupt children. Fourthly, hee ^{A prooef of the indictment.} prooues this indictment and every part thereof, by charging them to their faces with murder, and blood, by reason of their horrible oppression, and crueltie towards all in generall, but more specially to. ^{Verse 15.17.} wards the poore, the widow, the stran-ger and the fatherlesse, all this is done in the fifteenth and seventeenth verses. In the practise of which sinnes, and all other

Verse 10.

Exod. 19.5,6

5

Verse 11,12,13.
14,15.Hypocrites in the
fauis of God.

Sam. 7.14.

Verse 5,6

kind of fitchines, they were such exquisite workemen, that they were more like the people of Dedom and Comora (whom the Lord with fire from heauen destroyed) then that people whom the Lord had chosen, and pickt out from all the nations of the world, to be a peculiar and a holie people unto himselfe. Fisly, they were such hollow hearted hypocrites in all the outward exercises of religion, that the Lord detested all their sacrifices, and vitterly abhorred all their prayers, as you may reade in the 11. 12. 13. 14. and 15. verses. To make an end with so bad a people, as lightly could not be worse, they were so desperate, and hardened in their wickednesse, that they were past cure, and no hope or verie small (if any at all of the greater part) of their amendment, because the Lord had assayed by all good meanes, to bring them to some goodness. He had wooed them with blessings, and feared them with his iudgements: he had chastised them often with rods, and many times scorched them with the plagues of the children of men: but all in vaine, the more they were corrected, the worse they were, and grew to

to be more desperate, as appeares out of the fift and sixt verses. After all this bad dealing, as though they had beeene no such leude and gracelesse people, or as though they had not offended so greeuously, nay rather as though the Lord had done them some greet wrong. he seekes to them (wheras they shold haue both sued and sought to him) that there might be a treacie of peace, and a ful reconciliation made betweene them. For which purpose he offers in most friendly and louing maner to comon with them, saying, Come let vs reason together.

The Lord is
treates peace at
their hands
which had highly
offended him.

Nowe giue me leaue once againe to deale with your conscience in this point. Charge your soule with as many sinnes as euer you can possibly call to minde, in any partie of your life, either before or since your calling, in ignorance or in knowledge, in youth or in age, howsoeuer, or with whom soever you haue committed them, either by thought, word or deed, in the light of the day, or in the darknesse of the night. Bind them all and euerie one of them in one bundle, cast them into the one end of the ballance: when you haue so done, take vp the sinnes of this

A particular ap-
plication of the
former example.

people, put them into the other ende and weigh them together without any deceit. Nay, for this once you shall haue leauie to shew your best cunning, and see if you can make your ende heameier. If you can not (as I am sure you can not, except you will use some notable deceit, which will be soone found out, so as you shall never be able to answere it) then knowe you, and let your conscience also understand, that if the Lord saide unto a wicked people, frowen in sinne, come, hee doeth much more saie to you, who woulde so faine leauie your sinne, come, and againe come, let vs two reason together. For, although thy sinnes be in thine own sight as crimson, yet shall they bee made as white as snowe, though they bee (to thy seeming) as redde as cuer was the scarlet, yet they shall bee as white as any wooll, because they shall bee all so perfectly scowred and washed in the bloud of Jesus Christ, as not any one of thent shall be able to condemne thee, either in this world or in the world to come.

And that you may bee the more holde to come, behold your sweet saviour (who being made sin for you that you might be

A strong reason
to prouoe and
peruade.

Rom.8.1.

2 Cor.5.21.

be made the righteousness of God)
 faith also unto you, come: yea for your
 further encouragement he offers, and is
 readie to take you by the hand, and to go
 with you himselfe unto the father, for
 whose sake you must needes be most
 heartely wellcome. And if you shall thus
 answers your Saviour Jesus Christ,
 that gladlie you would come, but that
 your sinnes doe so clogge, and loade your
 heart with sorrow: then heare how againe
 he replies vpon you saying. If the case
 stand so with thee, then come in any wise,
 yea therefore the rather come. For if thy
 sinnes doe put thee to paine, and be as a
 heauie burden, to bigge for thee to beare,
 come thy way, and lay them all vpon my
 shoulders, for my backe is broade enough
 to beare them all, were they neuer so ma-
 ny. I am well content to beare the whole
 loade of them mine owne selfe, that thou
 mayest be fully and for euer discharged.
 For such sinners doe I call, and such sin-
 ners onlie will I saue, as are in paine
 and throughly tyzed with their sinnes.
 As for such sinners as haue stoe of sinnes
 hanging vpon them, and either doe not
 seele them, or care for no helpe, I haue

Matth. x. 28.
Another reason
of great weight:
will you not
come when your
Saviour calleth
you for your
goal.

The tired sinner
vily boldely
cometh to Christ.

Matth. x. 28.
Marke well that
Christ will save
humbled sinners
and none other.

Math.9.12,13.

nothing to do with them, neither will I be any Saviour unto them. For, the whole neede not the physician but the sicke. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Rom.5.1.

Thus farre I haue endeuered to satisfie your first and maine obiection, and to my power aimed at this marke, namely, to pacifie your troubled conscience with this comfortable and sound persuation, that beeing iustified by faith, you haue peace toward God threugh our Lorde Iesus Christ, by whome you haue boldnesse and entraunce vnto God the Father, and that by the powerfull working of Gods spirite, which is the spirite of adoptiona which you haue received, whereby you crie Abba Father. The same spirite beareth witnesse with your spirit, that you are the childe of God. And if you bee a childe, then are you also an heire of God, and a ioynt heire with Christ. And therefore not I, but Gods holie spirite in the Epistle to the Hebrewes (whose wordes you ought both to regard and reuerence) saith vnto you in this wise : Let vs goe boldly vnto the throne

Ro.9. 15,16,18.

Hebr.4.17.

throne of grace, that wee may receive
mercye and finde grace to helpe in time
of neede.

I beseech you marke aduisedly that
the autho^r of the epistle calleth upon you
to goe, and to goe boldely. But whither
would hee haue you goe? for sooth to the
throne. And to what throne? Not to a
throne of iustice, of wrath, and condemna-
tion, but to a throne of grace and mercie.
It is indeede a throne of iustice, of wrath,
and condemnation, but not to you, nor a-
nie such as you are. The throne against
your comming is couered and hanged all
ouer from end to end, both wide and side
with most rich & costly cloth of grace and
mercy. The hangings are al of grace and
throughout embrodred with nothing but
mercie. View them your selfe, looke vpon
them throughtly, and you shal finde all
mercie and nothing els but mercie. Ther-
fore you are willed to come to this throne
boldly, because it is a throne of grace
and mercie. And that you may knowe
before hand what you shall gaine by your
comming thither, you are told plainly &
truely, you shall find (that which your
soul most longeth after) store of grace,

Labour to call
off feare when
God would have
you holde.

You are louingly
called to come to
a louely throne,
hanged all ouer
with hangings
of grace and
mercie.

Mercie welcome
you

and you shall receave so much mercy as may heipe you, when you shal stand in most neede of mercie. Thus must it needs be, and otherwise it cannot be, because the iudge himselfe, who sits vpon the throne, is a iudge ful of mercie, clad altogether with rich robes of mercie, and your great frend, who wil shew you all y fauor that may be. For why, he is Iesus your Saviour, who will in no case suffer you to miscarie.

*You must needs
be welcome, for
the Judge is your
great friend.*

Math. 1. 21.

The second obiection and answer.

*The troubled
minde cannot
apply Christ to
it selfe.*

*Advise your selfe
well, that he that
knowes you calls
you.*

*Isa. 43. 1.
Fear not, for I
have redeemed
thee, I have cal-*

Here is good occasion offered to answere a secound obiection of yours, which is, that you beleue, that Iesus Christ is a perfect and an able Saviour, but not your Saviour: that he saith come, but he saith not come to you. But I will prooue he speakest to you as wel as to any other, and that as particularly and as plainly as if he shuld call you by your name, and say, come M. P. E. I speake unto thee by name.

First, you will grant, that in those wordes (which you finde thus written, in Mathew chap. I I. ver. 28. Come unto me all you, that are weary and laden, Christ Iesus calleth al sinners generally, you

you are one among the rest. Therefore let thee by thy
he cal's you. For he saith, he came to call ^{name, thou art}
sinners to repentance. ^{mine,}

Secondly, in the sothenamed wordes he
cals such sinners onely particularlie and
by name as are wearie and laden with
their sinnes. Are your sinnes pleasant to
your palat, and sweete vnto your taste? Judge you, whe-
ther you be
called.
Doeth the remembrance of your sinnes
make you laugh, as though ye were tick-
led, when you thinke vpon them? Is it
the ioy and pleasure of your sinnes, which
drawes so great strok of salt teares from
your eyes, and fetcheth so many deepe
sighes from your heart? Doe your sinnes
lie vpon your conscience like some little
light feather? or rather do they not presse
and holde you downe as a woonderfull
weightie burthen? If you be in this case,
then may you know, if you will know that
which shall doe you good, that he speakes
to you by name, and saith vnto you, come
boldly and feare not, I will ease thee of
all those thy sinnes, which are so great a
burthen to thy conscience, and will giue
thee a gracious generall pardon in my
death and passion. Moreouer, I will
from top to toe couer and cloath thee
with

With the rich robes of mine owne righte-
ousnesse unto the full assurance of euerla-
ting life.

The third obie-
ction & answer.
The troubled
mind complaine-
s of the weaknesse
of faith.

Every man com-
plaines of his
owne paine.

Many deere ser-
vantes of God are
greatly grieved
for the weaknes-
s of their faith.

The third obiection followeth, that your
faith is weake, and so weake, as you are
fully perswaded there is no childe of God
hath so weake a faith as you haue. I per-
ceiue it fareth with you as it doth with one
that is greatly troubled with þ tooth-ach,
gout, stone, or some such strong disease,
who being in verie great paine, in the ex-
tremtie thereof cries out, þ there was ne-
uer any creature in the world so cruellie
tormented. And why saith he so? forsooth
because he feeleth his own paine, and no o-
ther mans beside: therefore he speakes of
that which himselfe feeleth, and not of that
which he doth not feele. For there be a
great many mo as greatly tormented as
he: but he thinkes not so, because he doth
not feele it so: Thus do you deale, you are
greatly troubled with the weaknes of your
own faith which you feele: therfore accor-
ding to your feeling you complaine, that
none hath so weake a faith as you haue: not
withstanding there be a great number be-
sides your selfe, who are as much troubled
this

this way as you. But I will take your own words. You say your faith is weake. Yea, then you grant you haue faith. And therefore say I, or rather the Lord himself for your comfort, you cannot possiblie perish. For God so loued the world, that *Iohn 3.16.* he gaue his onely begotten sonne, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but haue everlasting life.

But your faith (as you say) is so weake, that you cannot thinke it to be anie faith at all. And I againe doe answer you with a better warrant than your thought, that a weake faith is a faith, yea a good and a sound faith. The weakenes of faith doth not take away the nature and being of faith, that because there is weaknesse in it, therefore it should cease to be a faith. Will you say a weake man is no man, because of his weakenesse? No, for he is a man though never so weake, as long as there is any life and breath in him. Neither doeth his weakenesse take away his goodness: for he may be a verie good man althongh he be verie weake: So say I of your faith, the weakenesse thereof takes not away y goodnes. It is a good, a sound and a lively faith, although it be weake. I

A weake faith is
a good faith,
therefore make
much of it, and
labour to strengh-
then it.

A weake man
is a man.

never

Weaknesse of
faith, a generall
complaint of all
the godlie,

neuer yet heard of anie beleeveng man or woman , but haue complained of the weaknesse of their faith. Nay for my part I haue marked it in sundrie examples, that the more godly and beleeveng , the more they haue complained . I coulde from mine owne experiance, name diuerse to proue this point, and some of them well knowne unto your selfe. But I wil name some one or two out of the Scriptures, and leaue the rest to your owne good consideracion.

make 9.24.
Example of a
weake faith in a
verie good man.

You reade in the Gospell of Marke the ninth chapter and fourteene & twentieh verse of so good and faithfull a man, as you wil your selfe confess, hee had a true and sincere faith , because hee saide unto Iesus Christ, Lord, I beleue. Neuerthelesse, this good man was sicke of your disease, and felte his faith to be weake , yea verie weake, and therfore he intreates the Lord Iesus very earnestly, yea crying out with tears faith. Lord help my vnbeleef. &c.

The Apostles
weake in faith.

Again you reade in Saint Lukes Gospel, the seventeenth chapter and fist verse, of the holie Apostles, whom our Sauour Christ had chosen to preach , and by their preaching to beget faith in others : yet even

even these men doe in like manner find and feele great want and weaknesse in their owne faith. For which cause they put vp their humble supplication vnto their Lord and master Iesus Christ, that he would increase their faith.

So that now you see verie plainly, there is no cause, why you shold too much dis-
courte your selfe, with the consideration
of the weakenesse of your faith. Because
the best and most faithfull seruants of
God, doe haue of this sore as well as you,
and shall doe as long as they liue in this
world. For there is no perfection of any
good grace in this life. We see and know
in part, and therfore must needes also
beeue and practise in part. Perfection is
no where to bee found but in heauen, that
that we may long to be there, and so bee
fully perfect. God vseth this as a holie
and good meanes righly to humble you
and many of his deare children for your
good, that by the true feeling of this
weakenesse, and many other infirmities,
you may see how much neede you haue to
runne continually for strength and succor
at the handes of your sweete Sauour,
who hath throughly supplied all your
wants,

Weaknesse and
wants will waies
vpon vs to our
grace.

1 Cor. 3.9.

Weaknesse of
faith aspecciall
meanes to hum-
ble vs.

wants, and who will so strengthen you, that your faith (though never so weake to your owne seeing) may never faile you. For which purpose I would haue you to lay sure holde of these wordes full of sweete comfort, deliuerned unto Peter by our Sauour Christ, for the stengthening of all the faithfull. Simon, Simon, Sathan hath desired to winnow you as wheate, but I haue prayed for thee that thy faith faile not. Marke I pray you, how Jesus Christ promiseth to pray for Peter, and not for him onely, but for all the faithfull. For is hee onelie Peters Sauour: is he not also the Sauour for Peter, and of all the faulthfull in the world: Is hee not your Sauour as well as Peters: yes truly. Then he will pray for you also.

Luke 22.32.

All the faithfull
are aduers to
Christ as Peter.

He prayeth for all
the faithful as wel
as for Peter, and
for you.

Joh. 17.20.

Matt. 3.17.

For so he sayth in that most sweete prayer which hee makes to his heavenly fater, for all the faithfull which shall beleue in him to the worlds ende. I pray not for these alone, but for them also which shall beleue in mee through their worde. And if hee in whom onelie the fater is wholie and altogether well pleased, and for whose sake hee can not bee displeased with you, doe praie for you, shall

shall not hee bee heard , and his prayer
fullie graunted : Yes it can not be de-
 nied.

But yet you say hee speakes to Pe-
ter , and promiseth to pray for him by
name. Yea, and that is as much as if he
should call you by your name, and say that
he will pray for you , and for so manie as

Christ in Peter
speakes to all the
faithfull by
name.

Sathan hath any desire to winnow. But sa-
tan hath a great desire not onely to wi-
now Peter , but all the rest of the faith-
full also. For so are Christ's words, say-

Sathan's malice is
deadly against all
the faithfull.

ing, Sathan desires to winnow, not thee,
but you, as if hee should say, his malice
is not against one alone, but against all.

Therefore as all must looke to them-
selues : so Christ promiseth to praine for
so many as are winnowed , and particu-
larlie for you, because you can tell that
you are winnowed. And whereas it plea-
seth the Lord thus to winnow and sift your
faith, you may be sure not to loose, but
to gaine thereby. For this you know,
the more the good coyne is fanned, and
winnowed , the cleaner it is; and the old-
er golde is put into the fining-pot , the
more pure and excellent it is. To this end
therefore are you fained after this manner,

that

1. Pet. 1. 7.

that the triall of your faith being much more precious then golde that perisheth , though it bee tried with fire, might bee found vnto your praise and honour, and glorie at the appearing of Iesus Christ.

The fourth ob-
jection and an-
swere concer-
ning prayer.

Cold prayer bet-
ter then no
prayer.

Now I come to answere a fourth ob-
jection of yours. That you cannot pray.
What, can you not pray at all? can you ne-
uer pray? Yes you thanke God for his
mercie, you can pray sometimes, but nei-
ther so often, nor so zealouslie as you de-
sire, and as your neede enforceth you.
Sometimes you pray, but verie coldlie,
and with verie little or no feeling. Some-
time you pray more earnestly, and so by all
that, you find small comfort. And some-
times though you doe what you can, you
can not praise for your life. This is as I
knowe by some wofull experience a verie
inst and true complaint : yet I remem-
ber when I demanded whether you could
praise at anie time, you could not denie
but you could pray sometime, and I am
persuaded with good feeling and sweete
comfort to your soule. Whereupon I
proue once againe to your conscience, that
you

you haue a true faith vnto saluation, because prayet is an vndoubted, and plaine fruit of a lively faith, accompanied with euerlasting saluation : for whosoeuer calleth vpon the name of the Lord shal be saved.

Rom. 10: 13.

Prayer is not a common gift, common but a speci-
mon to all, but a speciall gift, proper on-
lie to the elect, as faith and repentance.

Prayer no com-
mon but a speci-
all gift given to
the elect.

The Apostle saith, All men haue not faith, 2. I. Cor. 10. 3. 2. so say I, all men haue not the gift to pray. A wicked man can not pray, because he can not belieue, for prayet is a most excellent fruit of faith. The ungodly haue not this gift in truth, or in any good measure, howsoeuer they haue many other excellent gifts of wisdom, councell, & learning, yet they want this, which the Prophet doth plainly auouch, saying of them, that they call not vpon God: as though he should say, they do many other things, but they doe not this, and no maruell, for indeede they cannot, because they want that spirite which should teach them to pray, for the spirite helpeth our infirmities, and prayeth in vs, yea this same spirite of sanctification which hath wrought a gracious mea-

D sure

sure of Faith and Repentaunce in your heart hath taught you also to pray, and to take so great delight therein, that you are glad when you can pray your selfe, or can be partaker with others when they pray.

Prayer is not a common gift.

The godly can not always pray as they would.

But you say sometimes you cannot pray at all, and therefore you doubt your selfe very much. If you could pray when you would, and as you would (beare with my plaineesse, for I speake from the feeling of mine owne heart) you would be preude, you would thinke it were but a gift of nature, in your owne power and no gift of God: so should God loose his glorie, so should you soone forget the right use of a notable blessing, and forget also to be thankfull. Howe you haue it but seldom, or not so often as you would your selfe, you knowe from whence you receive it, and when you haue it, you use it with more reverence, and make more account of it, you take more ioy in it: and when you want it, you groane to God for it the moe earnestly. It is verie needfull and much for your profit, that the Lord woulde excuse the best of his seruants with the want of manie blessings and graces both for their bodies

The want of many blessings and graces is very needfull and profitable.

bodies and soules. It is good some times to be sick, that we may knowe ^{To be sick,} how good a thing it is to enjoy the benefit of health. It is good sometimes to be hungerbitten, that our meate may be the more sauourie, that we may be the more thankfull for our foode, that we may receive and vse it more reverently, and the more willingly receue such as stand in neede. It is good for vs some nights to be abridged of our natural sleepe, that we may knowe ^{To want sleep,} there by, that it is the Lord who gues rest ^{PSAL. 137. 5} unto his beloued. It is verie meete we should sometimes be troubled in conscience, that we may knowe how precious a blessing that is aboue all others, to enjoy the peace of conscience, and to labour aboue all things to attaine to it, and to maintaine the same. It is good for vs sometimes to be cleane to seeke haue to piaie, that when we can piaie, we may be the more humble, reverent and thankful.

But if you like to stand upon this point to bygge the same against your selfe, I will as in the sight of God, to his glorie, and mine owne shame, confess the truth

⁴
To have a trou-
bled concience,
Peace of con-
science a precious
bleeding.

unto you, as it is with me in this thing. I haue more cause a thousand fold, to doubt my selfe herem, then you haue, by reason of the great calling which the Lord hath layed vpon me, being a minister and teacher of the word. Therefore the Lord be mercifull vnto me a wretched sinner. For my wicked euill heart is so narrow and baren in prayer, that many times I cannot pray at all. And this falleth out not onelie in my priuate meditations betweene God and mine owne soule, but in my dailie prayers with my houesold, wherein I haue beeue forced for the most part to vse, and that almost word for word, a shott prayer, which I haue set downe in a shott Cathechisme for the helpe and furtherance of such as are vnder my charge. And if vpon some speciaall occasion offered, I indeuout my selfe to pray otherwise, it is such poore, dry, naked, and sillie stusse, both for words and matter, that after I haue prayed, I am a great while matuelously tormentted in conscience. And I shoulde be vtterly ashamed, that you or any other shoulde come within the hearing of my babling priaers. And assuredlie, were it not that I felte some

This hath beeene
in former time,
now through
Gods grace it is
otherwise, yet
performed in
great weakenesse,
and with many
wants, besides
some speciaall ex-
ercise an other
way sufficient to
abate the pride
of my heart, and
to keepe me vn-
der.

some more gracious assistance, from the Lord in those prayers, which are offered by in my publike ministerie, I could haue small assurance of Gods louing fauour towardes mee. This I confesse according to the truth, that you may know you are no more alone in this point, than in the former, and to incite you to pray for me, following the good advise of the holie apostle Saint James, who counselfeth vs, to confess our sinnes one to James 5.16. an other, and to pray for one an other.

But alas say you, how should I pray for you, when I can not pray for my selfe. If you cannot pray in set wordes, and in fine order, can you not therefore pray at all? can you not sigh and groane inwardly, in the true feeling of your soul, as one that is so greatly oppressed with griefe, that he hath not a tongue to utter that which he hath within his minde. If you can sigh and groane, after this maner, be of good comfort. For you haue learned long since, from some of your faithful teachers, who haue many times soundlie taught this point from the word of God, and that o^r purpose for the relief of weake

True prayer is not
a set order of fine
wordes.

consciences, that you pray verie effectually. Your sighes are prayers which the spirite, from whom they proceed, understandeth right well, yea although there is not so much as ane one worde vited to expresse them. Wordes are for our understanding, that we may thereby knowe one anothers meaning. But the holie spirite which is our comfortable scholemaister, and searcheth the deepe things of God, knowes our meaning and thoughts before we speake, yea although we speake not at all. For as the Prophet David saith, He knowes our thoughts long before. And the Apostle saith, the spirite helpeth our infirmities, for we knowe not what to pray as wee ought, but the spirite it selfe maketh requests for vs with sighes, which cannot be expressed.

The sighes
of the Godlie are
acceptable
prayers.

These sighes breakeing out violentlie from the consciences of the godlie, are prayers, and loude cryes, acceptable to the Lord, and pearcing deeple into his eares, as appeares in Exodus 14.15. Where the Lord demaundeth of Moses why hee cryed sovnto him, whereas the wordes of the Text make no mention of ane

anie one woyde hee speake or uttered. I
 pray you tell mee this one thing, if the
 childe of your owne bodie, whom you
 loue dearelie, and which is vnto you as
 your owne soule, shall be sicke, and be-
 ing full of paine, shall moane hym selfe
 vnto you, tell you howe sicke hee is,
 where his paine doth holde him, and shall
 entreate you euuen as you loue him, to
 doe what you can to ease him, will you
 not doe it both willinglie and readilie?
 yea, will you not doe whatsoever you
 are able euerie kinde of way for the ease
 of your deare dearling? But if his paine
 shall encrease and grieve so great, that
 it takes awaie his speech, so as hee is
 not able to speake a woyde, but to fetch
 deepe sighes, and to moane himselfe vnto
 you by most greeuous groanes, will
 not these groanes peare your heart more
 deepelie, and cause the bowels of compas-
 sion to yerue in you more stronglie, to
 straine your selfe euuen to the uttermost of
 all your power to affoarde him as much
 comfort as is possible, both by your selfe &
 by others? shall the groaning of your child
 worke great pitie in you, and shall not the
 the mightie groanes of your poore sicke

A simile.

The Lord exceedeth all men in goodness and compassion, and therefore will heare and helpe you readily.

soul, move the Lord your God to greater compassion: If in such a case you will be so readie to heare and helpe, know you for certentie the Lord will be more readie to heare and helpe, whensoeuer you shall in the anguish of your soule groane unto him. For looke how farre he exceeds you and all other in goodnesse: so farre also doth he exceede you and all other in mercie and compassion.

Beside all this, there is no sacrifice more acceptable in the sight of God, then the sighes and groanes of a troubled minde. For so saith the Prophet. The sacrifices of God are a contrite spirit, a contrite and broken heart O God thou wilt not despise. Therefore make as good account of the groanes and sighes of the spirit, as of any prayer you can make, euen in the best wordes you can devise. And for a farewell of this matter, remember that the godlie and good king Ezechias, could not in smooth and fine wordes, poure out his prayers before the Lord in his great sicknesse, but chattered like a swallow or a crane, as hee confesseth of himselfe. Consider also that the poore Publican, being ashamed

Psalm 51.17.
The sighes of the
spirit are to be
regarded.

Ezechias could
not pray, but
chatter.

Lu. 18.14.

shamed of himselfe, by reason of his sinnes, and fearing to lift his eies toward heauen, could not deliver his minde at large, in fit, and choyse words, but with much paine, at the last he breakes forth after this manner, O God be mercifull to me a sinner. Neuerthelesse our Saviour Christ giueth sentence on his side, that he went home more iustified, then the proud Pharisie, who had both words and winde at will.

The Publican
prayed fervently,
but said little.

Lu. 18:9,10, &c.

Your first obiection doth thus offer it selfe, That you cannot leaue sinne. And that which doth more trouble you, you cannot leaue those sinnes, which you haue vowed to leaue, but you fall againe into them. First you reason thus against your selfe, that you can not leaue sinne. No maruell, for although you be one of Godes sanctes, and haue receiuied the spirit of sanctification in measure, to fight the Lords battels against sinne, and hell: yet are you no Angell in this world, so as you can altogether ceasse to sinne, because you carrie, and shall carrie unto your graue, a bodie, and soule subiect to sinne. Therefore you must fight this battel even

Sinne cleasnes now
fall to our names
to part with it in
halfe.

No perfect con-
quest ouer sinne
will death.

Christian con-
rage and armor.

Eph. 6. 13, 14,
etc.

Be carefull to
fight Christ his
battell, and feare
not the issue.

even so long as you haue breath and life. This enemie of yours is so strong, that he will never be fullie overcome, vntill you haue ouermastered him by death. And then you shall haue a full and perfect conquest ouer him and all your enemies. In the meane time, plucke vp a good heart, gird you self with all your Christian armour, put on your complete harnessse, and euerie part thereof, as you finde it set down in the sixt chap. of the Epistle written to the Ephesians, take your weapon in one hand, I meane the sworde of the spirite, and your buckler in the other, that is to say, the shield of faith. Lay about you lustily, with all the strength and cunnynge you haue. Yea, bee strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. And fear not the issue, although you lache and catch many a soze blowe, no though you be foiled and wounded, because you haue a valiant captaine Christ Iesus your Saviour, who hath alreadie himselfe gotten the victorie for you, and who will not shrinke one foote from you, vntil such time as you also haue gotten the victorie. For in all these things wee are more then conquerours through him that loued

vs. Rom. 8.37. And that you may haue
the more courage to fight this field with-
out fainting, understand thus much, that
all the faithfull doe ioyne bands with you
to fight out this batteil.

All the faithfull
doe fight one
and the same
batteil.

The holie Apostle Paule had recey-
ued a great measure of sanctification a-
bove manie thousandes of Gods chil-
dren: yet could not hee get the full ma-
rrie ouer sinne, but that full soze against
his will to his hearts grieve hee fell into
it. Therefore with sorrow of soule, hee
complaints in the seventh Chapter to
the Romaines. That the good which
he would he did not, but the euill which
hee would not, that did hee. And that it
may be well vnderstoode, that this was
not onelie a sharpe hote skirmish, for a
short fit, but a set battle to continue to
the ende of his life, you may reade howe
after sundrie and diuerse greevous com-
plaints of his owne weakenesse, and of
the strength of sinne, as a man that is
wearie of his life, for no cause but this
onely, that he could not leauue sinne, hee
breakes out into these wordes of great
passion. O wretched man that I
am, who shall deliuer me from the
bodie

Rom. 7.19.

Paule fought a
bloudie field
with sinne.

Verse 24.

Poul could not
leave sinne as he
desireth.

bodie of this death? In which speech he doth betwix two things. First that hee could not leauie sinning, although it was his whole studie, and the onelie thing among manie, which he most earnestlie desired. Therefore he calles himselfe a whetched man, because he carries about a bodie of sinne and death. Secondly, that hee had as longing a desire to cease from sin, as any man could haue. And therefore hee asketh this question. Who shall deliuer me?

The godly would
faine leauie sinne,
and so would you
with all your
heart.

May 5. 18.

The godly sinne
not willingly as
the wicked.

Howe tell me I beseech you, is it not thus with you: Would you not faine leauie sinne if you could, and that with all your heart, are you not wearie of it, and sore gricued for it: Must it not needes bee thus, because you complaine so greatly, you can not leane sinne: You sinne in deede, but not willingly, nor of set purpose; you drawe not sinne unto you with cart ropes, as the wicked doe, but you are violentlie drawne by the furie and violence of sinne. You hunt not after iniquitie, to pursue and followe after it, with the intisements thereof. But sinne hunts and pursues you, till you haue lost both wnde, and strenght, and so it

it may bee, you are manie times taken prisoner. In which case you are no more to bee blamed, then a Souldiour, who in battell is full sore agaynst his will taken prisoner of his enemie, which thing is most manifest to your owne conscience, because when you are taken, and you perceiue it, you behauie your selfe as a man, which is fallen into his enemies hande. For your heart is greeued, and your soule wonderfully troubled, your sleepe departeth from you, you can eate no meate that doeth you good, you take no pleasure in anie worldlie thing, there is no mirth in you, but you are all heauie and sad. If you bee in companie, where you are prouoked to bee merrie, you laugh but for companie: for it is but from the teeth forwarde. To bee short, so long as you are holden captiue of anie sinne, you are wearie of your life. Therefore all your studie is howe you maie breake off the fetters of sinne, and bee deliuered, whereto you applie all your wit, power, cunning, and skill: And if through the great goodnesse of God, you get anie aduaantage to escape, there was never anie fowle moze glad

The godly study
how to breake
off the fetters of
sinne.

glad of a faire day, or bird that hath
braken out of the fowlers net, more ioy-
full then you are of so happie deliuerance.
And when you are deliuered you are e-
uer afterwards more carefull a great
deale that you fall not againe into your e-
nemis hand.

The wicked do
trade in sinne.

Mat.7.23.

Ps.1.3.3.

Coloff.3.1.

It is better with
you then you
thinke for, and
therefore be
thankfull and
cheere vp your
heart in the
Lord,

Againe you make not a trade of sinne,
to follow it dayly and hourely as the
workers of iniquitie, who follow it as
carefully and continually as any man
followes his occupation whereby hee
mug lue. But the trade which you
follow, and the way wherein you walke
with delight, is the continuall medita-
tion of the lawe of God, with an earnest
desire to practise it in your whole conuen-
tation. Your minde and affections are
not set vpon the earth, but vpon hea-
uen, and vpon those things which may
bring you to heauen. Therefore in the
true acknowledgement of Gods great
mercy towards you, you may with peace
to your soule saie with the Apostle
Paul in the seventh chapter to the Ro-
mans and the fift and twentieth verse, I
thanke God through our Lord Iesus
Christ, because in my mind I serue the
lawe

lawe of God, although in the flesh,
that is in that part, which is vnteg-
rate I serue the lawe of sinne.

Touching that other point, namely that
you fall often and againe into that sin,
which you haue vowed never to committ
againe: for as much as the same is against
your wil through great infirmite, and not
of anie set purpose, although I wch you
in anie wise to be as carefull as may be
therem, and to vse all good and holie
meanes of watching ouer your affecti-
ons and avoiding all those occasions,
whereby you may bee drawen forward
into anie the least sinne, by praying, fa-
ming, and such like holie exercises,
whereby you may be better strengthened
against all assaultes of sinne: yet would

I not haue you to discourage your selfe
too much with the consideration there-
of. For this you knowe that one which
walketh in a slippery way or upon ice,
may against his will, yea though hee
ooke never so well to his feete, not one.
lie take the first, but the second, and the
third fall, yea manie falle, notwithstanding
that he thinketh to set his foote mar-
velous sure.

It is no wonder
in this corruption
to sinne often in
the same sinne.

All good meanes
must be vied a-
gainst evrie
sinne.

Consider wchly
and apply with
reverence.

Abram

Abraham fell
more than once
into one sinne.

These examples
are to comfort
such as woulde
leue sinne, and
not to encourage
any to live in
sinne.

Abraham although hee was the father of the faithfull, and for his godlmesse highlie commended in the Scripture: yet through great weakenesse, lyed first in Egypt to Pharao, in denying Sarah to be his wife, Genesis the twelvth chapter and thirteenth verse. Againe hee fell into the selfe same sinne vnto Abimelech, the king of Gerar, Genesis the twentie chapter, and second verse. Sarah also gaue her consent both times, and was partaker of the sinne. Isaac their sonne vp on the ike occasion, so readilie coyned a lie, as if his father and mother had not only by practise, but by precept taught him to lie. I knowe both what I say, and to whom I speake, for as these examples and such like, may not, nor ought not, to make vs bolde to runne headlong, or to continue with delight in anie sinne great or small: (for then wo unto vs) so they serue to comfort vs, that wee stand not ouermuch amazed at our daylie slippes in sinne.

The fift obiecti-
on concerning
hardnes of heart.

Nowe followeth a fift obiectiōn con-
cerning hardnes of heart, That you can
not profite by the wortē preached, and
there-

therefore thinke it were as good or better
not to heare at all, as to heare to no pur-
pose, and profit. For hardness of heart,
which is the first branch of this obiection,
I answere that it is a principal part of the
corruption of the old man, which clea-
neth last vnto our nature, and is one of
our mortall enemies, which will haunt
vs vnto the death. For our faith shall be
exercised therewithal, as long as we shall
live in this world. Therefore our best re-
medie is to arm our selues wth the ar-
mour of proofe before rehearsed, and to
buckle wth this armeslare, whose edge
and courage, by little and litle shall be ab-
hated. And for your encouragement this
I say, that flesh and bloud hath not ope-
ned your eies to see this to be a sinne, nei-
ther touched your heart, with a misliking
thereof: for then you might long ago
haue found out this and manie other
sinnes, when they raigned in you more
strongly, and caried you headlong, with-
out any resistance or misliking into much
evil, to commit sin with great greedines.
But then you could find no fault at all
with your selfe, nay you thought your self

Hardnesse of hart
will hang vpon vs
and haunt vs to
the death.

Looke well
your armour.

Blesse gods name,
that now you see
and greeve for
that sinne which
in former times
you neither saw
nor greeved for,

Your ease all one
with the Apostle
Paul. Ro.7.9. &c.
Act. 26.9.

in as good case as was possible. And no man well, because you were blinded through the darkness of your owne understanding and reason, so as you could judge no colours.

Now, through Gods goodnessse, for the welfare of your soule, your eies which were blind, are opened to see those things which you never saw before, and your heart is touched with a wonderfull misliking of that which before you loued. Yea indeede you must needes confesse, you see and feele your hardnesse of heart, but you cannot helpe nor amend it. No, but the Lord both can and wil helpe to amend whatsoeuer is amisse in his time. In the meane time, do what you can, be patient, tarie the Lords pleasure, wait vpon him, and he shall comfort thine heart.

Give God leue
and he will helpe
that which you
can not.

Psal.37.14.

A generall com-
plaint of the best.

Where you say, you cannot profit by the word of God preached, that is also a generall complaint of all such as are most carefull to profit. But your owne words do professe against your selfe, that you doe profit. For if you profited not, how comes it to passe that you haue found out this fault, that you cannot profit. It is not the maner

for an afflicted conscience: 61

manner of such as doe not receive profit by
the word preached, to find fault, but to
please and flatter themselues most, when
they profite least. Therefore this is a
great argument and sound prooife of your
profiting, in that you can thus blame
your selfe, that you doe not profit. And
it please ih the Lord thus to exercise you
and the rest of his beloued ones, with the
feeling hereof, not to discourage you, prooife.

The complaint of
not profiting is
verie profitable,
because it makes
you carefull to
profite.

but that this may be as a whetstone to
sharpen your stonake, to heare with
greater conscience, and as a spurre to
make you more egar vpon the word, when
it is preached, that the oftener you heare,
you may desire more and more, to profite
by hearing.

But where as in the end, you shalve
downe this logge in your owne way,
that it were good, not to heare at all, 3
am to giue you speciall warning, as you
tender the saluation of your owne soule,
to take heed howe you giue consent
to that temptation, in the least thought
of your heart, for it is a strong enchant-
ment ofathan, to bewitch you with-
all, and a chiose baile to catch your soule

As you loue your
soule take heede
of this temptation,

The deuill him-selfe hate- pica-
ching (more than
holy water) be-
cause it ouerthrew
with his king-
dome.

in euermaking destruction. He knowes this as well as anie man can tell him, that the word preached is the onelie w^est principall meanes, which God hath or-
dauned to strengthen you against the whole battarie and force of al his tempta-
tions. Hee knowes also that from
thence you daylie gather courage against
him. Whether it be thus or not, I ap-
peale to your conscience. And if you haue
found this powerfull worke in your owne
soule, tyen so often as hee shall thrust in
this temptation say vnto him auoyde
Sathan, for thou labourest to murther my
precious soule, by withdrawinge me from
the meanes of my saluation.

Matt. 4. 10.

The deuils craft
in reasoning.

But howe doth he urge this point a-
gainst you, and with what reasons. First
because you doe not feele profit present-
lie. Secondlie because you doe not pro-
fite so much as you shoulde. Howe
marke I beseech you the deuils craft
in reasoning. First you feele no profit by
the word presentlie so soone as you heare
it preached: therefore you doe not profit
at all. You feele not profit presentlie,
therefore you shall never feele profit.

You

You shall see this cunning laied open
to your vnderstanding in a familiar ex-
ample, after this manner. A sicke man
hath Philicke gitten him to helpe his sick-
nesse : He is not helped presentlie so
sone as hee hath taken it : Therefore he
shall never haue helpe. The husband-
man doth lowe his seede, and calls it
into the ground, that it may growe and
bring forth fruit : But it growes not
so soore as it is sownen : Therefore it
will not growe at anie time, neither
shall hee euer reape anie croppe of his
seede.

Againe hee reasoneth thus against you,
you profit not so much as you shoule,
or not alwayes alike : Therefore you
profit not at all. This is as if one shoule
reason after this fashion . One acre
of corne some yeare bringes forth fiftie,
tene, twentie, or a hundred fold :
But it doth not so euerie yeare : There-
fore it bringes forth nothing at all. Some
yeares an occupier gaynes a hundred
pound by his trade : Hee gaynes not so
much every yeare: Therefore he gains no-
thing. Thus the devil reasoneth with you

The devils coun-
ting laide wide
open by sensible
reasons.

therefore be your selfe iudge of his maner
of reasoning, and the Lord in mercie gime
you wisedome, in all things to take heed
of his wilneise, that you be not by him a-
nie way abused.

The last obiection concerning
euill thoughts.

Ierem. 17.9.

The heart is like
a bottomlesse pit
which can never
be drawnen drye.

The seventh and last obiection is, con-
cerning euill thoughts, which arise in the
minde, wherewith I know, some are not
a little troubled, for comfort of whose
weake consciences, which are many times
ouer much greeued by the consideracion
thereof: I answere thus from the Pro-
phet Jeremie the seventeenth Chapter
and ninth verse: that the heart is de-
ceitfull, and wicked aboue all things,
who can know it? By which place (if
my iudgement doe not much abuse mee)
this one lesson may be rightlie and kindly
gathered, that when the best men and
women haue done their best, to their best
power, they shall never attaine, or come
to the perfect, and full knowledge of all
the corruption, and filthinesse which is
therethatched, and harbourred: because it is
like vnto a bottomlesse pit, which can never
be drawne drye. Hereupon I reason thus.

If

If we shall never in the whole course of our life, come to the thorough, and full knowledge of all that venomous poison, which is deepe rooted in the dungeon of our vnderstanding : how then shall it ever be possible for vs, to attaine to the perfect reformation of so manie disorders, as are there to be found. Againe the Lord himselfe saith, That all the imaginacions of the thoughts of mans heart, be euill, onelie euill, and that continuallie. If all be euill by nature before we be regenerate, and borne a new by a second birth of the spirit, and word, and that continuallie : then no manuell if some be euill, and that continually after our regeneration. Because wee be renewed but in part, and we haue so put Ephes 4:24. on the new man, which after god is created in true holinesse and righteousness, as that we shal never cleane, and altogether put off the old man with all his deceiuable lustes, vntil we put off this flesh, and that by death.

In this one point standeth a great part of our Christian warfare, wherew^t we are at all seales and seasons, to stand

This is our taske
to our dying day,
to fight against
our affections
which are our
deadly foes.

1.Pet. 5.11.

Our vniuely and
Irrately lusts do
yewe vs continu-
ally.

Faith and prayer
are our bell ar-
mow.

Provib. 16.32.

Upon our garde , and to watch with all
diligence , inwithstanding the euill affec-
tions and thoughts of our hearts, which
as Peter saith fight against our soules.
For these be such spicfull enemies , as
lodge themselves close even in the closet
of our heart , they rage and dranke with
vs , they sleepe and wake with vs , they
ride and goe with vs , they get out and
in with vs : to haft out , when our other
enemis , the world . and the diuell doe
graunt vs some tyme of truce , these will
affoord vs no peace , because they lie so
neare vs , as that euermore they are at
hand ready to assult vs , both before and
behinde , and on euerie side . Therefore we
are to the uttermost of our power , to
arme our selues strongly against them by
faith , by prayer , and all other good and ho-
lie meanes . That wee maie daylie get
ground of them , and through Gods
grace , ouermaister them in some good
measure , to our everlasting comfort . The
rather because the wise man saith . He
that is si we to anger , is better then a
mighty man , and hee that ruleth his
owne minde , is better then hee that
winnewth

winoneth a citie.

But euern now while we are speaking
of euill thoughts , there comes in one,
with a most lamentable complaint , say-
ing, O sir , I am so troubled this way,
as I thinke there was never anie childe
of God so grieuouslie troubled . For I
haue such wicked and blasphemous
thoughts, as make my flesh to tremble,
and all my bones to shake , yea they are
such as they almost draine me to dispaire,
when I thinke vppon them . For they
strike not at men , but at God himselfe.
They exalte themselves against the per-
sons of the Trinitie, and some of them a-
gainst the blessed , and holie Scriptures .
What they bee in particular , I am asha-
med to speake . If you bee ashamed so
much as to name them , then I perceiue
you take no great liking of them , neither
doe you meane to entertaine them . And
therefore I answere in fewe wordes , they
shall not be able to hurt you . If I regard
wickednes in my heart (saith the Pro-
phet) God wil not heare me . He doth not
say , if there be any wickednesse at all in
my heart , or anie thought of wickednesse .

(For

A wofull com-
plaint against e-
uill thoughts.

psalm 66. 18.

There is one thing to haue euill thoughts, and another to like of them, and delight in them, (For who can say, my heart is cleane,) but if I regard wickednes, that is, if I delight in it, or meane to nouish it within me, then I am sure the Lord will not heare my prayer, nor shew me any fauour. But as if the Prophet shoulde say, and as I am sure you doe say, that is farre from me, to take delight in any such ungodlie, and blasphemous thoughts, yea so farre, as I am not more greeued for any thing, then for this, that any such thought shoulde come into my minde. And therefore hee and you, and you as well as he, may bee undoubtedly perswaded, the Lord will neither reject you, nor your prayers, which in Christ his name, you shall offer vpon him.

And whereas you thinke it so strange, to haue so euill thoughts, to arise in your minde, and that you are perswaded there are no moe so tempted beside your selfe, I answeare vpon mine owne knowledge, you are therein greatlie deceiued. There bee manie who are euuen as much troubled with the same, or with as euill. And this I dare auouch, that the most godlie are not free, but are subiect v-

The most godly
are not free from
euill thoughts;

to most vngodly thoughts , although Rom.3.10. and Pial.51.5.
 they yeeld not unto them. First because they as well as others , doe cattie with them, a cursed corrupt nature , which is the roote from whence all euill springeth. Secondly, because they haue such an enemy , as will not spare to tempt them to the greatest euill , yea , to this , then the which there can be none greater , name lie , to curse God: as the iust and holy man Job w^tis tempted. But as that good man withstoode the temptation , so doe they fight against euerie euill motion , and are preserued.

Yet there is one thing more concerning euill thoughts , which is , that you can not be rid of them , but that euer , and a none they come into your minde. To this I answere , that the sooner you checke 1.Pet.1.11 them , and the more strongly you resist them , the sooner a great deale , & all you bee rid of them. First , you must resist : for , resist the devill and he will flee from you. And heere marke , that this resi stance , must be by the word , and by praier. Secondelie , you must resist egerlie , and spedilie. And therfore as David hasted

Job tempted to curse God, not in his heart, but with his mouth, Job 1.7.

1am 4.7.

The ready way to be rid of euill thoughts, is to resist them.

to

70 Consolations

Rom.7.48.

Mark.4.19.

Rom.8.37.

Rom.4.35.

to fight against Goliath, and with courage flang a stone so hard, that it stacke fast in the foreheade of the uncircumcised Philistim: so must you speedilie strike at euerie such thought, so soone as you shall perceiue the same to put out his head, and once to arise in your minde. And as Jesus Christ, being tempted of the dwell to fall downe and worship him, at the same instant gave him his answere, saying, avoid Sathan: so must you give them a present answere, and send them packing to the diuell of hell, from whence they come, and whither you are in all haste to returme them. If when you haue vsne what you can, you finde your selfe too heake for them, & that they be too hard a great deale for you, then turne your captaine Christ Jesus to them, who hath so fullie conque red for you, as that howsoeuer they shall assayl you continuallie, and manie times foile you, yet shall they never get the full victorie ouer you, but you in your captaine shall be more then a conquerour ouer them and all the rest of your deadlie enemies, for Christ was deliuered to death for our sinnes, and rose againe for our iustification.

for an afflicted conscience, 71
fication. To him therefore be glorie for
ever and ever, Amen.

Thus you haue the pledge of my good
will towards you & manie others, which
I haue not done to exclude anie grace or
blessing of comfort which you may receiuie
in greater measure, from your owne god-
ly pastor (most carefull of your estate) but
that you may more highly account of so
excellent graces of God in him. And that
what soever is wanting in this my
poore treatise, may by him
bee more fullie
supplied.

F I N I S.